

THE WASHINGTON POST

2 AUG 1968

C.I.A. F.O.B. Kirkpatrick, Lyman B.
P-Wise, David.
Soc. 4.01.2 Espionage
Establishment
Soc. 4.01.2 The Real CIA

THE ECONOMIST JULY 27, 1968

47

SPY STORIES

The Real CIA

By Lyman B. Kirkpatrick.

Collier-Macmillan. 312 pages. 35s.

The Espionage Establishment

By David Wise and Thomas B. Ross.

Cape. 308 pages. 35s.

The author of the first book was an official of the American Central Intelligence Agency from its inception until 1965. For the last three years of his CIA career, he was the agency's executive director. And a very good one he must have been. For nothing in his book gives a clue to what the CIA must feel like from the inside. We are asked to accept Mr Kirkpatrick's explanation that it is a bureaucracy like any other, with inter-departmental feuds like any others. Perhaps an exceptional interest is taken in the physical and mental health of CIA employees. Perhaps a certain outside agency was jealous to the point of telling tales to Senator McCarthy (the late) about the CIA's misdeeds. What kind of interest? What was the name of the agency? Aha, that would be giving away secrets—the last thing that we should expect of a crack intelligence agent, no matter what the title of his book promises.

If Mr Kirkpatrick is chary about delivering the goods, he makes a brave attempt when it comes to the matter of the Bay of Pigs. There are fairly detailed accounts of the CIA's disillusion with the Batista government (which came earlier than that of the American Embassy in Havana) and then with the lack of unity among the various Cuban exile groups in the United States. Mr Kirkpatrick is a good raconteur, so good that he pretends to be unaware of what he is leaving out. But still when the point comes to tell the real truth, the fudging is conspicuous.

"It was in this atmosphere [worry about the Communist leanings of Castro once he had become premier] that President Eisenhower gave his permission to the CIA to provide support and guidance to Cuban exiles to plan and prepare an operation that would free their island of Castro." Who asked General Eisenhower to give permission for the plan? The CIA, one suspects, but no answer is offered here. Looking back, however, Mr Kirkpatrick is unequivocal on some things.

President Kennedy should never have admitted American responsibility for the invasion and there should always be a clear separation between "those who evaluate intelligence and those who mount operations based upon intelligence." Don't blame the CIA, in other words; it is well-meaning, over-investigated and misunderstood.

Some sceptics need to be convinced over and over again that spies really do exist. Mr Wise and Mr Rose give ample proof that there are plenty of secret agents about, even though secrets may be in short supply. Their book describes in considerable, though superficial, detail the organisations that Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union and China use to engage in the kind of snooping that used not to be officially acknowledged. President Eisenhower changed all that, the authors maintain, when he admitted openly that an American U-2 had been spying on Russia. Since then there has been a revolution in espionage. It has all become semi-public and each spy, far from expecting to be shot upon capture, prays not to be needed for another of markedly inferior worth.

The authors, two Washington journalists, performed a public service with an earlier book about the American Central Intelligence Agency. They go after the CIA again here and, in a sense, their book has been written for Americans. The CIA is dangerously uncontrolled, they say, and must be restrained, for in America, perhaps more than in the three other countries described, an agency of government dedicated to stealth does not sit very well with the national puritanical conscience.

The section of the book devoted to Britain will draw a loud ho-hum from any reader of the Sunday newspapers—Profumo, Philby and all that. But there are a lot of fascinating bits and pieces out of James Bondland—microdots, shortwave radios, stolen birth certificates and lethal aerosol sprays. Sometimes intelligence methods are not very intelligent at all. A hole in some steps in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, was not a good place, after all, for Russian spies to exchange messages, as they found after a conscientious park keeper had the hole cemented up, message inside.